The Teaching of Orthic Shorthand, Part I

A series of lessons for the use of teachers and students of orthographic shorthand

W. Stevens

1896

Contents

1 Introduction to the alphabet **7**

1.1 Introduction - Babes in Learning 7

1.2 The analogy between longhand and shorthand 7

1.3 The alphabet 7

1.4 All vowels are straight-on written strokes 7

1.5 The size and shape of the characters 7

1.6 Analogous characters 8

1.7 The circles 8

1.8 Conclusion - read and write any letter 8

2 Joinings - Vowels **9**

2.1 Combined vowels 9

2.2 Ae, ea, ai, ia 9

2.3 ay 9

2.4 Other combined vowels 10

2.5 The diphthong rule 10

2.6 The y upstroke rule 10

2.7 Conclusion - observe students 10

3 Joinings - Consonants **11**

3.1 L and R 11

3.2 Ch and H 11

3.3 S after F or K 11

3.4 H and its connections 11
3.5 Q 12
3.6 S before and after P 12
3.7 W 12
3.8 X 12
3.9 Conclusion - read and write sentences from blackboard 12

4 Basic abbreviation **13**

4.1 Lesson prerequisites 13
4.2 First abbreviation rules 13
4.2.1 (a) Leave out a and o before m and n 13
4.2.2 (b) No need to dot the i 13
4.2.3 (c) Initial Th is omitted 13
4.2.4 (d) Inflections with y retain the y 13
4.3 Common terminations 14
4.3.1 -ed 14
4.3.2 -ful 14
4.3.3 -hood / –head 14
4.3.4 -ight 14
4.3.5 -ion 14
4.3.6 -ation 14
4.3.7 -ity / -ly 14
4.3.8 -less 15
4.3.9 -ness 15
4.3.10 -ment 15

4.3.11 -ough . . . 15
4.3.12 -ther . . . 15
4.3.13 -ward . . . 15
4.4 Conclusion - General abbreviation rule . . . 15

5 Common abbreviations 16

5.1 Introduction . . . 16
5.2 Ever . . . 16
5.3 ou for ound or ount . . . 16
5.4 Common words . . . 16
5.5 Conclusion . . . 16

6 Introduction to modes, first mode 17

6.1 Lesson prerequisites . . . 17
6.2 Lesson overview . . . 17
6.3 The modes . . . 17
6.4 Th, vowel V vowel (Eve) . . . 17
6.4.1 Th . . . 17
6.4.2 Eve (vowel V vowel) . . . 17
6.5 Be . . . 18
6.6 Per pre pri pro and peri para . . . 18
6.7 Lesson conclusion . . . 18

7 Second and third modes 19

7.1 Introduction . . . 19
7.2 On the line . . . 19

7.3 Below the line . . . 19

8 Slurs **20**

8.1 Slurs mb dv . . . 20

8.2 Slurs mm/mn, dd, dt, and td . . . 20

8.3 T slur rule for count, country, duty . . . 20

8.4 L slurred with T in wealth, health . . . 20

9 Conclusion **21**

9.1 Where the student is now . . . 21

9.2 What to do in this lesson . . . 21

9.3 Two rules for speed and perfection . . . 21

9.3.1 First rule . . . 21

9.3.2 Second rule . . . 21

9.4 Common terminations and how to deal with them . . . 21

9.5 Use The Teacher with Manual and Supplement . . . 22

9.6 How to use The Teacher for teaching . . . 22

9.7 The importance of dictation . . . 22

10 About this document **23**

Preface

The following lessons have been drawn up for the use of teachers in the "Orthic" system of shorthand. It should be borne in mind that shorthand has a two-fold aspect, first, it has by signs indicating letters, to enable a writer to take down on paper what is said; this is, by itself, somewhat easy; but it is essential, secondly that what is put down should be readable. Therefore teachers and students are strongly recommended to see that the eye, the brain, and the hand are trained at equal speed. Reading and practice should always accompany the teaching of writing. Use the blackboard freely; use the reading books issued with these lessons. Write sentences on the blackboard from the books, at each lesson, and make the pupils read them. Dictate to your class as soon as possible, and make them read aloud from the books or magazines directly they can make out any words at all. If teachers and students will only follow these hints, and the lessons, as they are laid down, not hurrying, immediate success will accrue to their efforts. Students should practice, at least a quarter of an hour a day, what they learned at the preceding lesson. If this is faithfully carried out, they will be able to write at speed, and to read in an extremely short time.

W. Stevens.

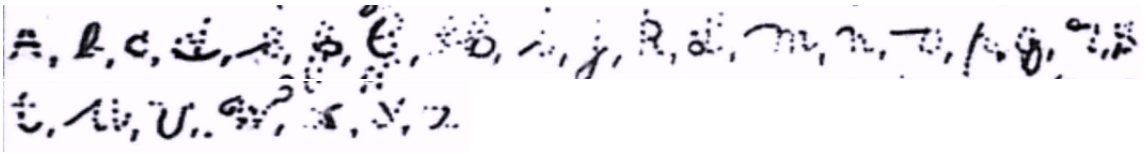
1 Introduction to the alphabet

1.1 Introduction - Babes in Learning

Impress upon the pupils the necessity of becoming again "Babes in Learning". They must have, as far as possible, an absolutely open mind, and commence, as children, by learning the alphabet.

1.2 The analogy between longhand and shorthand

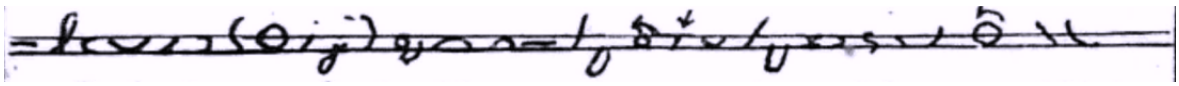
Show on the blackboard the analogy between the longhand and the shorthand character; this time at once impress it upon the memory; the thought of the well-known longhand character will necessarily carry with it its analogue, the shorthand symbol, thus



Add the two distinct forms , and ing.

1.3 The alphabet

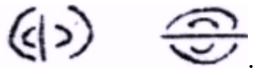
Now write the alphabet, between lines, on the board.



1.4 All vowels are straight-on written strokes

Point out that all vowels are straight-on written strokes, and that, conversely, all straight-on written strokes are vowels, thus *A*, *E*, *I*, *O*, *U* (is written at an angle of 30 degrees with the line.)

1.5 The size and shape of the characters

Very particularly differentiate between the sizes of the characters, the larger to be three times the size of the smaller. Show the geometric nature of analogous letter, as  .

1.6 Analogous characters

Give the following aids to memory: analogous characters , as in longhand, small c, large C, adding loops = . , O = long A. T, D, analogous, analogous sounds and shapes; also M, N; , S, down stroke, has its larger analogue in . P; Y in ing. above line is J below line; F, K; are analogous; Q, and V also, the one top-joined, the other open.

1.7 The circles

The chief difficulty lies in remembering the circles; try the following aids:

(a) Analogy with the longhand H, L, R.

(b) H has its diminutive analogue in R, both lie at the top of a following line; *ch* and L are similar, and lie at the bottom of a line.

(c) R turns against the clock, from Right to Left; L turns with the clock from Left to Right; or, R lies ove r a following line, L be l ow it.

1.8 Conclusion - read and write any letter

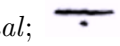
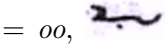
Let the pupils practice these alphabet forms until they can write instantly any letter called for, and can accurately give the relative signs. Be sure and let the students read from the blackboard any character you write, as well as themselves writing any letter you dictate.

2 Joinings - Vowels

2.1 Combined vowels

The alphabet being truly known, commence joinings; start with combined vowels; then make the pupils join every letter of the alphabet to preceding and following vowel, and combined vowels, pointing out any difficulties.

2.2 Ae, ea, ai, ia

Combined vowels are *ai*, *ay*, *ea*, *ee*, etc. Note that characters, whether vowels or consonants, are duplicated by placing a dot under the letter, thus = *aa* as *Baal*;  = *oo*,  *foot*. The distinction between *E* and *I* is that, when necessary, the *I* is dotted as in long hand. Therefore, in doubling *E* or *I*, do not dot, but lengthen, thus *ee*, *ei*, as *reed*, *reid*.

Ae, *ai*, *ea*, and *ia* are formed of the letters ; now in rapid writing it would be almost impossible to preserve the angle, hence we draw a rule, (the problem being to get from as quickly and easily as possible), eliminate the angle, and thus make an on-written oblique curve, *ai*, *ae*, or *ea*. The curves may be written either way as most convenient, having regard to the preceding or following consonant; except that the combined vowels *ai* must always be written in the order of the letters *a i*. Examples, *dear*, this is better than writing , which in very rapid writing might become *demr*. *fear*, *year*, *Ealing*, *meal*. But *ai* must be written *a i*, as *mail*. For aid in reading it is better to dot the *i*.

2.3 ay

The same reasoning applies to *ay*, , eliminate the angle, and make an on-written oblique curve, or . Observe particularly that *e* and *i* being up strokes, the curve will rise; *y* being a down stroke, the curve will fall. As *day*, the curve is better than , which might become *dm*, or *dmy*, *may*. See Manual P. 6. A.

2.4 Other combined vowels

Other combined vowels are treated similarly, as *au* , *ou* , a short line slur and a long line slur; *ua*; *eu* *eau*, etc. *Oa* and *ao* are shown by writing, if necessary, the *A* above the *O*, thus *oar*, *Laon*.

2.5 The diphthong rule

We now draw this rule, "all on-written oblique curves are combined vowels, or diphthongs", conversely, " all diphthongs are on-written oblique curves".

2.6 The y upstroke rule

An upstroke vowel following or preceding *y* is written with an angle *ye*, *obey*.

2.7 Conclusion - observe students

Examine pupils thoroughly in this lesson.

3 Joinings - Consonants

3.1 L and R

Continue the combination of letters as given in the manual, pointing out the following: *bl*, *br*, the *L* lies at the bottom or left side of the upright character, and the *R* at the top or right side; similarly *pl*, *pr*; *fl*, *fr*, *ml*, *mr*.

Note that it is usual to mite a vowel following *R* attached to an upright letter from the top, as in *pra*, this is to save time, and to avoid going round the circle twice.

3.2 Ch and H

Compare *Ch* and *H*, these are analogous to *L* and *R*, *Ch* is written like longhand *O*, that is, it begins and ends at the top, and consequently, like *L*, lies under the following vowel, as *cho*; *H*, on the other hand, begins and ends at the bottom, and consequently, like *R*, lies at the top of a following vowel, at *ha*.

In the combinations *chl*, *chr*, put the *L* or *R* inside the larger circle, thus *chlo*, (observe the *L* lies below the vowel line) *chro*, here the *R* lies above the line; compare *Phl*, *Phr*, Manual p. 10.

3.3 S after F or K

S joined to the finish of *F* or *K* is better, (as the hand is traveling in a curve), turned up rather than down; thus *ks* is better than .

3.4 H and its connections

H has, in English, the following consonants preceding it: *C*, *G*, *P*, *R*, *S*, *T*, and *W*. *Ch* has been explained; *gh* is written in order, ; *ph* also, or according to the next letter, thus *phar*, *phy*. *Rh*, the *R* can lie just outside, or curl within, the *H* circle, as or ; *Sh*, following our alphabet analogy, is written three times as small as *ph*, thus .

If the combination *Shr* is desired, it is shown by continuing the next letter from

the bottom, instead of the top of the circle, as = *shro*, but = *sho*. *Th* is written in order . *Wh* is made like *Ch*, but is not joined at the top, thus = *who*. It may also be remembered thus, enlarge the *W* X to look like *H* X.

3.5 Q

Q = *qu*; as there is no word in the English language commencing with *q* that is not followed by the letter *U*, it is reasonable to allow to stand for *qu*.

3.6 S before and after P

S before and after *P* should be rounded. *sp*, *ps*, *sps*.

3.7 W

The letter *W* has a two-fold symbol , the first initial, the second final. Observe the longhand character in Lesson 1, students will then never forget which is which, or the direction they turn. Initial *W* is always used at the beginning of a word, except before R. (*Wh* we have already explained) Before *R* final W is used, thus , the reasoning that written the other way , the combination really becomes *wer*, not *wr* only. Note that *W* begins on the line, not above it as = *t*.

Another way to remember *W* is to point out that whether initial or final, it is an upward tick, as *wo*, *ow*. The letter may be written either circularly or angularly as or *owing*, or .

The angular form is used after *S*, thus *sw*, formed of *s* and *w*. To add *S* to final *W*, elongate the loop, thus *cow*, *cows*.

3.8 X

X is made up, as in longhand, of *C* and *S*, , and there is no English word beginning with *X* that is not preceded by *E*, this character may be used to represent *Ex*. There is no need to make an angle in the combinations *Exh*, *Exch*, as .

3.9 Conclusion - read and write sentences from blackboard

Now let the students write simple sentences and read from the blackboard.

4 Basic abbreviation

4.1 Lesson prerequisites

The students should now be able to write any dictation in full style, and to read the first exercise book of the Psalms. The progress of the writing and reading should be simultaneous.

It is a prudent course to dictate a Psalm, and let the students correct from the printed exercise. Lesson 4 should not be given until this result is attained.

4.2 First abbreviation rules

Being now able to read and write in full style, the rules for first abbreviations may be given.

They are

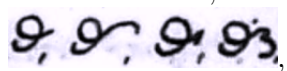
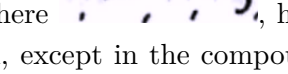
4.2.1 (a) Leave out a and o before m and n

Always leave out *a* and *o* before *m* and *n*; where there are double *a's* or *o's* leave out one, thus *command*, *son*, but *soon*.

4.2.2 (b) No need to dot the i

There is no need to dot the *i* in simple words, *it*.

4.2.3 (c) Initial Th is omitted

Initial *Th* is omitted, and the rest of the word written above the line, thus = *the*. Why? Because were the *Th* written, the succeeding letter would come as placed, above the line. E.g.  , delete the *Th*, . What is left and where  , hence the rule. *Th* in any other part of the word is written, except in the compound word "although", which is written . The only case of a word written above the line and not presupposing initial *Th* is the word "and" signified by *a*, written above the line.

4.2.4 (d) Inflections with y retain the y

In adding inflections *y* retain the *y*, thus "tries" is spelt "trys", "applied" "applyd", etc.

4.3 Common terminations

Common terminations should be abbreviated as follows, after the ordinary longhand abbreviation, or a logically scientific rule.

4.3.1 -ed

leave out the *e*; as used = us'd .

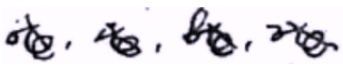
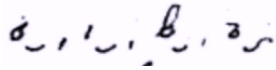
4.3.2 -ful

leave out the *u*; *useful*, ; this last example, *beautiful*, shows one reason for retaining the *y* in the inflected word, "beautyfull".

4.3.3 -hood / –head

hd only; .

4.3.4 -ight

t below the line. But surely this is an arbitrary rule? No. Follow the writing in *light*, *sight*, *bright*, *frighten*, etc., ; now erase the *'igh'*,  ; what is left and where? Why  ; hence the rule. It is better to show the vowel after *l* and *r*, so as to show which consonat it is by the way it is turned, as .

4.3.5 -ion

this termination is shown by = *ion*; .

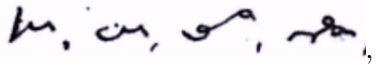
4.3.6 -ation

is a common ending, and it is wise to shorten it as much as possible, therefore use detached *n* to represent this termination, as .

4.3.7 -ity / -ly

-ity = *y* above the last letter

-ly = *y* below last letter

Why? because the would be there if the whole word was written; thus  , erase *'it'* and *'l'*, and we get .

4.3.8 -less

ls, as in longhand.

4.3.9 -ness

es, .

4.3.10 -ment

mt .

4.3.11 -ough

this ending, as is well known, has many ways of being pronounced, but for the sake of simplicity and uniformity we take the common *"tho"* as equivalent for *"though"*. Hence *o* = *ough*; so we get as representing *ought*, *thought*.

4.3.12 -ther

slur the *t* into the *h* circle and put the *r* inside, thus , *other*.

4.3.13 -ward

leave out the *w*, as a seaman say *for'ard* for *forward*, .

4.4 Conclusion - General abbreviation rule

Let these rules be thoroughly learned and practiced. Simply, at this lesson, lay down this further rule:

In abbreviating words it is usual to follow the longhand method of writing the first syllable, or distinctive feature of the word, and add the ending, detached or joined as may be the most convenient for future reading.

5 Common abbreviations

5.1 Introduction

Now teach the abbreviations given on page 18 of the Manual. These are common words. Show that the abbreviation here used is in accord with the generally accepted longhand abbreviation.

5.2 Ever

Draw attention to = *ever* : this appears an arbitrary; it is not; students will see the logic at the next lesson.

5.3 ou for ound or ount

Show the importance of *ou* standing for *ound* or *ount*. Emphasize this by such words as *pound*, *sound*, *count*; hence *counter*, *county*, *country*.

5.4 Common words

Add the following common words:

aso = also, *ea = each*, *ay = any*. is *because*, therefore = *cause*. being *child*, = *children*. = *from*, show clearly that being *for*, is form, not *from*. = *great*, = *much* (*ch* curled inside), = *that* (*th* left out and *t* written above the line), = *already*, = *acing = according*, = *after*, = *bth = both*, *el = else*, *e'en = even*, = *except*, *lp = help*, *kn = know*, *lile = little*, *ler = letter*, *pt = part*, *s = sir*, *rk = work*, = *word*, = both *would* and *world*.

5.5 Conclusion

Point out that words similar to those given above can be treated in the same way as *such* like *much*; *party* , etc.

6 Introduction to modes, first mode

6.1 Lesson prerequisites

This lesson should not be attempted until the preceding ones are thoroughly known and the students can write fairly quickly in the style abbreviated up to this point; and, further, can read the second *Book of the Psalms* which is written in this abbreviated form.

6.2 Lesson overview

This being accomplished, the teacher can take the pupils on to supra and sub linear writing as detailed in this lesson.

6.3 The modes

There are three modes of writing a word, either 1. above, 2. on, or 3. below the line.

6.4 Th, vowel V vowel (Eve)

We have explained one example of writing above the line, in the case of initial *Th*, see Lesson 4. It is however possible to use this method in other cases without running any risk of clashing, while it is clear that the use of mode writing is a great saving in time.

6.4.1 Th

Use mode 1 only when initial, except in the case of the word *although* .

6.4.2 Eve (vowel V vowel)

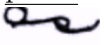
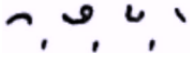
It is clear that the shorthand characters *eve* must throw everything following the final *e* above the line, and it is also evident that such words cannot clash with that peculiarity of the English language *Th*, except in the words *even* and *then*, which has been provided for above.

Therefore apply the rule *Mode 1*, and wherever *vowel v vowel* come, in any part of a word, leave them out, and write the rest of the word above the line, just where it would have come had the whole word been written. E.g. = *given*,

loved. N.B. It is better to write the vowel after *l* and *r* for reasons similar to those given in Lesson 4, to show the direction in which the consonants are turned. = *evident*, = *conceived*, = *ever*. See paragraph 2, Lesson 4.

But how about a word ending in *ave*, *ove*, etc. only? What is Euclid's definition of the end of straight lines? A point, is it not? Shorthand *e* is a straight line; the end of that straight line is a point; therefore write the point. Thus *give*, *love*, *rove*.

6.5 Be

As there is a very close relation between *V* and *B*, and as words with the prefix "be" belong to a special English class, we may without fear use *Mode 1* to indicate the prefix "Be". This abbreviation is only to be used when "be" is a distinct prefix, as  = *behold*; it would be incorrect to write for *bead*, this would be *Be-ad*, not *bead*. By the same reasoning as the dot indicating *vowel-v-vowel* so the verb "be" may be shown by a dot; thus ; the only liberty taken in using this prefix "be" is in the common words been, better, best, and by which are written  , respectively.

= *bring*, compare crooked *ing* for *thing*.

6.6 Per pre pri pro and peri para

As stated, supra linear writing is very useful for rapidity, and if other prefixes can be found that cannot possibly clash with the rules laid down, they may with advantage be safely indicated by this mode. Such are found in words derived from the Latin and Greek languages. We thus get the prefixes *per*, *pre*, *pri*, and *pro* from the Latin, and *peri* and *para* from the Greek; all of which may be expressed by *Mode 1*.

6.7 Lesson conclusion

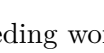
See that the pupils thoroughly appreciate the supra-linear writing; the gain in time; no clashing possible. Thoroughly understand *th*, *be*, *per*, *pre*, *pri*, *pro*, *peri*, *para* are indicated only when initial, prefixes, or quasi-prefixes. Vowel *ve* can be indicated in any position in the word.

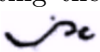
7 Second and third modes

7.1 Introduction

Today we take the second and third modes of contraction, that is, on the line, and below the line.

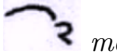
7.2 On the line

The common primitive *con* or *com* may be expressed by a dot on the line, or by leaving it out altogether, and writing the rest of the word quite close to the preceeding word, as , , or  = *I commend*.

For other abbreviations by this mode, it is only necessary to use the accepted longhand style, and to follow the rule laid down in the Manual of writing the important part of the word, and the termination, e.g. = *different*,  *difference*, *ultimo*, *interest*, and so on.

In words having the combination *dj* leave out the *d*, in *tch* leave out the *t*.

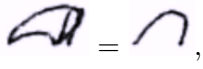
7.3 Below the line

Sub linear writing is writing below the line. We have already had an example of this, with the reason, in = *ight*. From this we can easily draw another rule - in the combination *dge*, *age*, *gn*, or *gram* it is clear that equally as in the case of "ight", the *g*, as part of the termination or syllable, throws the rest of the word below the line, e.g. = *for gn* = *foreign*, *age*,  *magnify*, etc.

The only other cases of sub-linear writing up to this point are the words 'take' and 'sake' and their inflections, which are written , etc. The *k* throws below the line, but in no other case is the *k* so treated.

8 Slurs

8.1 Slurs mb dv

We have now to study the "slurs" commonly used. Notice the combination *mb*, if we can get an outline that will embrace both these, preserving the character of the outline - the greater you know will always include the less, this axiom is the basis for the common slurs - time will be saved. We thus get a character like this  = , and this outline does stand for *mb*, as = *member*. This character has too its analogue below the line; look at , one outline will embrace both.

So we get these aids to writing for the combination *mb*, for *dv*.

8.2 Slurs mm/mn, dd, dt, and td

Again, *mm* or *mn* often come together when by the rule the vowel is left out, as in the word *man*, , now one large curve will embrace both .

Similarly *dd*, *dt*, or *td* may be represented by a large .

8.3 T slur rule for count, country, duty

We have seen that as = *count*, therefore = *county*, we therefore extract a rule *t* may be slurred in such words as *duty*, *bounty*, etc.

8.4 L slurred with T in wealth, health

L may be slurred with the *t* in such words as *wealth*, *health*, etc., and the softly sounding vowel in terminations such as "al", *final* , "er" in *upper* , etc.

9 Conclusion

9.1 Where the student is now

The pupils should with their present knowledge be able to write in *supplement style*, at least 60 words per minute, and to read fluently the *Third Book of the Psalms*, and the *Magazine*, and to correspond rapidly with any member of the *Cambridge Shorthand Society*.

9.2 What to do in this lesson

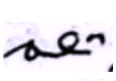
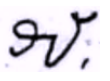
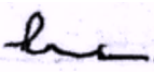
The only thing to be done on this concluding lesson is to draw the students attention to the list of recognized contractions as issued by the Society, to assist them in phrasing and to consider a few general terminations.

9.3 Two rules for speed and perfection

The two following rules should suffice to enable any student to acquire such perfection and speed that he is then able to study the suggestions given elsewhere for reporting.

9.3.1 First rule

The first rule applies to phrasing, and it is, "words that are closely connected in sense may generally be joined together, and sometimes slurred.

Examples:  = *I should have been*,  = *with a view to*,  = *able to do so*, = *as soon as*, etc.

9.3.2 Second rule

The last rule is an important one and should be thoughtfully remembered. "Never try to contract if it is easier to write in full or if it produces hesitation."

9.4 Common terminations and how to deal with them

Common terminations such as *ent*, *ency*, *ence*, *graph*, *ism*, *ship*, *mise* can be easily written shortly by using only the last letter or two, as *t*, *cy*, *ce*, *ph*, *m*, *p*, *se*.

9.5 Use The Teacher with Manual and Supplement

The "Teacher" should be used in conjunction with the Manual and Supplement; these books will fill in detail the hints here given.

9.6 How to use The Teacher for teaching

Teachers of Orthic will use their discretion as to the dovetailing of these lessons according to the class and progress of their students; make them read equally with their writing; don't let them worry about trifles, for there should be no conscious thought, for this produces hesitation and loss in time.

9.7 The importance of dictation

Begin to dictate not later than at Lesson 3, and make your dictation applicable to your lesson. In transcribing make a judicious use of the context.

10 About this document

This document is a translation/adaptation of the original document (see link below) into Emacs Org-mode format and exported to PDF and EPub formats for easy reading.

The source code is hosted at https://github.com/jacmoe/orthic-teach-part-1. New versions of this document is available at that address, and should you find errors in the text, it would be greatly appreciated if you reported it there.

The original, untranslated document can be acquired from the following address: https://orthic.shorthand.fun/teaching-of-pdfs.

Adapted versions of the Orthic Manual and Supplement can be found at the Orthic home page: https://orthic.shorthand.fun/.

Do visit the Reddit Orthic Society, https://www.reddit.com/r/orthic/, to discuss, learn, and share your work with fellow Orthicians.

September 2022 Jacob Moena